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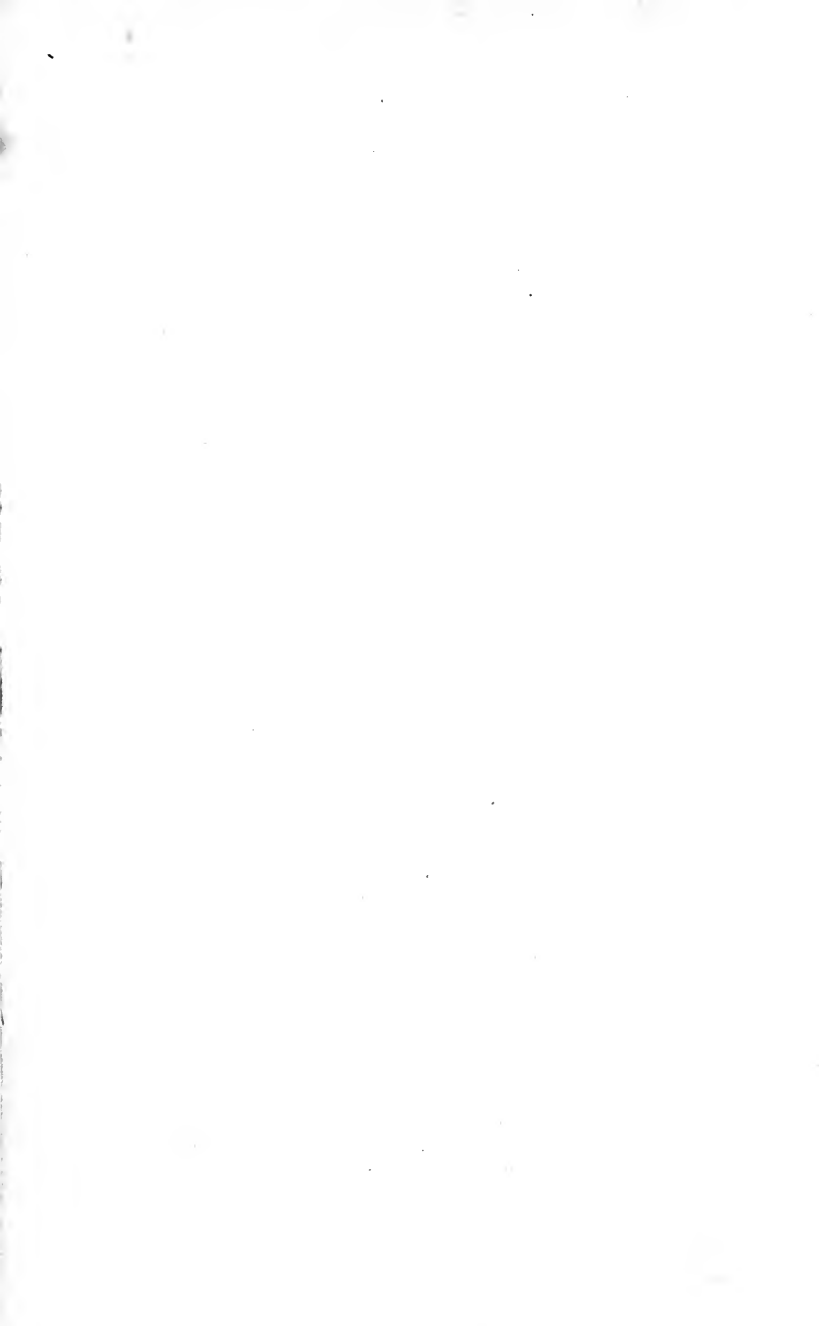
*Love Letters of
an Actress
Elvie Sambo*



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LOVE LETTERS
OF AN ACTRESS





A decorative border of stylized flowers and vines surrounds the text.

Love Letters of an Actress

by
Elsie Janis



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1913

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To My Friends





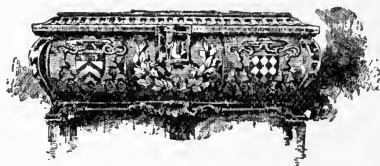


Foreword

This little book is not in the least statistical, it is merely the legitimate off-spring of imagination and observation. Personally, the only man that ever told me he could not live without me was divorced by the lady he married two months afterwards, on the ground of cruelty. However, this is my idea of how a popular actress should be loved.

ELSIE JANIS.





Contributors

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AND

The Actress
Age 24, Successful Everywhere





LOVE LETTERS
OF AN ACTRESS



The Boy





His First Letter

YALE COLLEGE, 64 YORK STREET

DEAR MISS MARSDEN :

I know you have hundreds of these requests a day, but please do not tear this effusion up without giving it a chance. When I say it, I mean "me." I want your picture, with your name on it. (That sounds like I had a gun to back the demand up with, but in this case I have only that feeble thing called a heart.) At this moment I want your picture much more than I do the diploma which my dad fondly believes I will receive two years from now. I will say no more. But if it is any satisfaction to a wonderful person like you are, it is the first picture I ever wanted, let alone asked for.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN J. WILKINS, Jr.

P. S.—Am coming to town for Easter ; shall see you every night from the front. If you decide to grant my request, address 52 East 78th Street, Town.

J. J. W.



Her Answer

17 EAST 57TH STREET

DEAR MR. WILKINS:

You have used a far more deadly weapon than a gun, and to such an extent that I am taking pleasure in answering your note myself. I send the best picture I have. It is my favorite. Now, your father cannot blame me if you do not get that diploma. If you would like it, you might come in to tea Friday of this week. I am not usually so informal, but you sound sincere, and where there is sincerity, there is no need for formality.

Cordially,

MARY MARSDEN.

His Letter

Two weeks later

MONDAY

DEAREST OF ALL :

Oh, how can I drag through these miserable days and nights. Since being in your presence Saturday, I have been as one in a dream; just existing on the memory of your sweetness. I know you will say I am young and laugh with that wonderful discouraging and yet encouraging laugh of yours and tell me to be sensible, but it is too late for that. Listen, Mary, oh, that wonderful name! I breathe it as I would a prayer. Darling, won't you leave all that light and falseness; you don't belong in it; won't you marry me and come away with me? I know I am young, but I will make you happy. Mary, be kind; for I cannot live without you.

Your,

JACK.

Her Answer

WEDNESDAY

DEAR FOOLISH BOY:

I am going to be kind to you by being a bit brutal. First of all, I do not love you, and that's an item in itself. You are very good-looking, and therefore I enjoyed looking at you and finding out what you were like. You are nineteen; I am twenty-four. You will have millions if you marry some nice girl that your father approves of, and you will bring her to see me act and she will say, "I wonder what she is like off the stage." Then you will be so ashamed of having written me as you have, that you will hesitate and then say, "I wonder; actresses are all sort of queer." Good-bye, dear boy; think of me as part of your college education.

MARY MARSDEN.

P. S.—Please do not try to see me again.

He Writes Again

FRIDAY

DEAREST :

How could you write such a cold, heartless, commercial letter? It is not a bit like you. You don't know me. I could not love anyone as I do you. You are right; father has the girl all picked out that he wants me to marry—the daughter of his partner in business. She is pretty and I like her, but love her—never. Oh, I am so miserable I can't sleep nights, but I shall respect your wishes not to see you again and suffer.

Thank God you did not ask me to forget you, for that is impossible. Farewell, darling.

Your,

JACK.



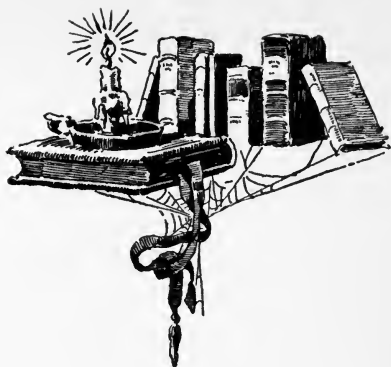
Clipping From "Town Topics"

Two months later

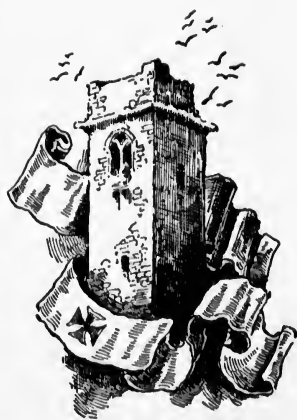
I have noticed young Jack Wilkins and little Freda Milton are inseparable lately. I predicted that match, and now as the Wilkins family and the Milton family are sailing together on the *Lusitania* to-morrow, I guess I am, as usual, right.

*"Youth forgives easily, but
forgets even more easily."*





The Lawyer





His First Letter

61 WALL STREET

DEAR MISS MARSDEN :

I read in to-day's *Herald* that you are having some trouble with your contracts. I do not wish to seem impertinent in this matter, but I have read the case and am interested. If you have no personal attorney, I should be pleased to handle this case for you. I know this is unusual, but I am very much interested.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM G. WILLOUGHBY.

Her Reply

TUESDAY

DEAR MR. WILLOUGHBY :

Your kind note received. Will you call and see me Thursday afternoon? I deeply appreciate your interest in my case.

Sincerely,

MARY MARSDEN.





Another Letter

Three weeks later

61 WALL STREET

DEAR LITTLE WOMAN :

Don't you be a bit worried now. I am going to win for you. I thought last night that you looked rather pale and tired. Please, dear Girl, do not worry. Depend upon me, for you know that I live to please and help you.

WILLIAM WILLOUGHBY.

Her Answer

WEDNESDAY

DEAR BIG MAN :

I will not worry any more, for I have perfect confidence in your powers, and your saying that you live to please me makes me very happy. I may honestly say that if this is true, you do not live in vain.

Always your friend,

MARY MARSDEN.



Another

Two weeks later

61 WALL STREET

SWEETEST OF ALL LITTLE WOMEN :

When I left you last night I was very unhappy because I had not accomplished what I started out to do. I am very brave in a court room, but very much of a coward when the jury consists of two large brown eyes that I love to death. I cannot face them, for I don't want to see them if they should frown; so I write my plea. You have shown me that you liked me by being with me, for as you often say, "Women who earn their own way don't have to be where they don't want to," but do you care for me enough to be with me always? I frankly admit that I cannot be satisfied to be your lawyer and friend. I love you too much. Think it over, dear. I love you madly—too madly to tell you so myself without raving. So that is why I write to you. This means everything to me; in fact, the thought of life without you is horrible.

Always,

YOUR BIG MAN.

Her Answer

17 EAST 57TH STREET

DEAR BIG MAN :

I am so sorry it cannot be. I like you, oh so much; too much to fool you by saying wait and maybe I can care; for I know that I could never care in the way I want to when I take the marriage vow. There are three kinds of love—respectful love, companionable love and passionate love. They marry on any one of them, but I want all three. The first I have for you; the second I am beginning to have by constant association with such a real “Big Man”; but the third could never come, because its place is first and the others follow. I won’t say, “Forget me,” for I should hate you to do so, but know that I shall always think of our friendship as one of the nice things in my life.

MARY.





His Farewell

61 WALL STREET

LITTLE WOMAN :

I understand and thank you for giving me a square deal. I am not going to see you again, for it would only mean strained conversation, and I want to always think of our associations as being at least natural. I am sailing to-morrow for South America on a big railroad case. Good-bye, dearest. I love you. That's all.

WILL.

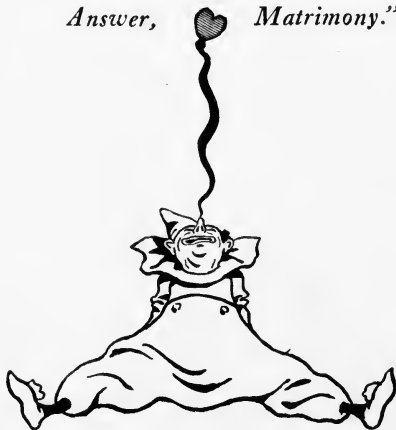
Announcement, Paris "Herald"

Six months later

CHILI, Oct. 7.—The engagement of Señorita Dolores Valaquez, the daughter of Señor Rodriguez Valaquez, is announced. The prospective bridegroom is an American lawyer, William G. Willoughby, who came down here a few months ago to settle up the affairs of the Central Railroad. Señorita Valaquez is called the "Belle of Chili," besides being an heiress in her own right.

"A man, a maid, and money.

Answer, Matrimony."



The Composer







The Beginning

LONDON, ENGLAND

MARY DEAREST :

This will introduce Mr. Raymond Tourney.
He is a dear and I know you will love him.
He is new in America, so treat him kindly.
A toi.

ETHEL.

P. S.—I almost forgot to say that he is a
wonderful composer and he plays divinely.

Her Note to Him After Their First Meeting

17 EAST 57TH STREET

DEAR MR. TOURNEY:

I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed meeting you and how your music has consumed me with admiration. I want to introduce you to some of my friends, as I know what it is to be a stranger in a strange land. Will you dine with me this Sunday at 7:30?

Cordially,

MARY MARSDEN.





His Acceptance

WEDNESDAY

DEAR LADY:

There is no power that could keep me from your side but your own command. That you like my music gives me new life, and I have recompense for all my work. *Au plaisir de vous voir.*

ROBERT TOURNEY.

Six Months Later

MONDAY

MY LADY OF DREAMS, to whom I owe all the happiness I have known in life, good-bye :

My dreams are ended and my aircastles crumbling and falling about my head. Dear old mother always urged me to fall in love with a good woman, and that it would help me in every way. Well, I have done it, as you well know, and with my usual cleverness, I have overdone it. I have fallen in love with a madonna, so far beyond my reach that the light blinds me when I look up to my desire. Mary, love of all that is good in my soul, forgive me for being a failure. I'm going back home, having failed in everything. But I have known you, have lived on your smiles and existed on the hope of seeing you again. All that is finished. Mary, listen to me; my boat sails day after to-morrow morning at ten. If you care for me at all in the way you know I worship you, send me a line and I will go home and work, work, work until I can come back a success. All I need

is your blessing. Oh, dearest, please tell me that I did hear a tender note in your voice when you called me your Music Man.

Adieu, my darling, help me to be worthy of you if you want me.

ROBERT.

S. S. Lapland.



Her Letter to the Ship

MY MUSIC MAN :

You were right; you did hear tenderness in my voice when I called you My Music Man, for my heart is full of tenderness for you. I have realized what you were going through, seeing other people succeed, who don't deserve it while you struggle on; and oh, dear Rob, I am so proud of you for breaking away like this without fuss, just because you knew it had to come. I am very fond of you, dear, and I think the only thing that has kept me from loving you really has been your lack of success. I have worked so hard to get mine that I cannot respect those who don't try. Go home and work, dear, work, and let me hear how you get on. I shall not marry for two years at least, so if that is any help and with it the blessing you ask for, only a hundred times more. *Adieu,*

MARY.

His Letter

Two months later

LONDON

MY MADONNA:

Joy fills my heart. My opera—no, our opera—is, as you know by now, an enormous success. All the papers compare it with “The Mikado,” and on Monday when they called for us to make speeches, mine was, “Mary did it all. I owe it all to Mary.” It seemed I just must say it to them, but I only bowed and murmured the dear old standby, “I thank you!” Now, darling, listen, in a month I am coming over to you, and oh, Mary mine, be merciful. If you do not love me, it is all for nothing, for I shall still have failed in everything that counts. I don’t see how I have lived without the music of your voice, but it is in every strain of this new work of mine. Mary is the theme, the plot, and the success of it. I shall not let you know when I arrive—I will just arrive, and oh, God in Heaven, send me not in vain.

All my love,

ROB.



Excerpt From Mary's Diary

Three weeks later

Rob will be here any day now, and I am nearly crazy. I don't know what I shall do, for I know now that it is not love of him, but of his wonderful music; for as I look back on the hours we spent together I remember I would urge him to play some wonderful soul melody so that I might dream of some one else that I had never seen. It must have been my mother's instinct that made me give him hope to try and make him become great. But I have done a terrible thing, for I do not even think of seeing him with joy—only to hear his music. Oh, I am miserable!

Clipping From New York "World"

Three weeks later

Among the hundreds of brave men who stood back to say, "Women and children first," in the greatest of all marine disasters was the young composer of "The Firefly," which is now the biggest success in London—Mr. Robert Tourney. When last seen by friends he was handing a little girl into a lifeboat. Mr. Tourney was considered the coming man in musical circles, and what makes it doubly sad is the fact that he was coming to America to be married.

"Truly it is said, 'We must die to be really appreciated.'"





The Actor





His First Letter After They Parted

PITTSBURGH

MARIA MIO:

How in the name of all the syndicate I can ever finish the season with this comic blonde that has dared to take the part made lovely by you, I don't know. You know how you feel when you're playing a week in Brooklyn and you think of the trip so much that by the time you get to the theater you're not fit company for a dramatic critic—well, that's the way I feel about her. I think of how awful it is all day, and at night—well, it's hell, that's all. I suppose she's all right, poor little pinhead; and anyone who played your part would get the same from me, for they certainly did break the model and stopped reproduction after they fashioned you, Maria, Amorcita de mavita. How about you, are you happy? I hope so. I beg your pardon, dearest, but I hate to think of anyone else playing opposite you. Do write and tell me that you don't like to have him touch you, for I lie awake nights hating his soul—the swine. I wax wrathful so I will cease and

get me to a hash-house for face-feeding purposes. Good-bye, dear,

Je t'aime
Ich liebe dich
Yó te amo
Io t'amo
and
I love you,

DAVE.

Some linguist, eh, what?



Her Answer

DAVE DEAR:

Your letter came, bringing with it brightness and relief like the entr'acte brings to an Ibsen play. You will never know how much I miss you, dear boy; half the sunshine is gone since we can no longer have our giggling fests. I miss your good looks, your nice voice and your wonderful figure, but most of all, your sense of humor. As for this person who is playing with me, I will not say I hate to have him touch me, but worse, I don't even know when he does touch me, so nearly nothing is he. Oh, Dave, I sigh for our old days on the road, the bum hotels, the long walks, the moving picture shows—all of it. Of course, I have made a "hit," but you can't read your press notices all the time. Write me often. You are a human cocktail when it comes to a pick-me-up.

MARIO.

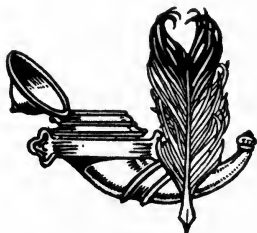
Another Letter

MARIO ADORABLE:

Your letter gave me the blues—God knows why—but there seemed to be an unhappy undercurrent to it. Am I right? And then, on the other hand, you made me so happy and gave me at least one night's sleep by your description of said leading man. Listen, Mario, I know I am taking a long chance and disobeying orders, but you can't give me a hard look from those wonderful almond eyes of yours; so here goes: Ever since the first night I told you how I loved you, and you said if I mentioned it again we could not be together, I have done a first-class imitation of a deaf and dumb college, but now it's all off. I'm mad about you now, just as I was the first day you blew in to rehearsal, and I shall always be. Remember no matter what I do you will know I still love you. Will you marry me? I remember hearing you say that you would never marry an actor. Well, I will quit acting—I will do anything you say. Mario, you are nearly twenty-five and I am nearly thirty. Let's try it when

the season closes. I've saved enough this year to take you away somewhere and love you to death. I won't sleep again until I get an answer, so please hurry. Original of that wonderful word, Sweetheart, tell me.

DAVE.



Her Answer

I've been crying for an hour, Dave, over your letter. The sweetness and frankness of it brought you right into the room with your blue eyes twinkling. Dave, dear, we can't do it; we are too much alike—we would laugh ourselves along for a year and then awaken to the realization that there must be serious talks as well as giggling fests to make up the day. I could not ask you to give up acting. You are far too good at it, and I could not give it up yet. If we both went on acting it would be the same old story—together a while and then apart, and nothing but a certificate to hang over our heads. Oh, no, dear; I am too fond of you for that. I am, as you say, not so very happy. I don't know what it is, but it's something. I would like nothing better than to go away with you and be loved to death as you put it, but when fall comes and I am to be starved, and they say keep

your marriage a secret, etc.—oh, no, it can't be done, dear, but I thank you for the honor you have done me, and I shall always think of you as a bright spot in what seems at present a rather dark stage setting.

Always,

MARIO.





His Last Letter

MARIO :

I know how you hate arguments, and I also know that they are of no avail when you have decided, so I bow to your superior wisdom, but I love you, I love you, I love you; the silence is broken; I am no longer dumb, and if you were here now, my darling, instead of kissing your long slender fingers as used to be your ladyship's command, I would take you in my arms and crush you until you cried for mercy. I'm raving. Don't mind me, dear. I have not slept for days. That's enough. Good-bye, love, and all that's dear, good-bye——

I started to make that a hysterical exit, but took a drink and went out into the cool night

air for an hour and I have come back sane. They are taking this piece to London next week and want me to go. Have raised me \$50, so I'm going. It may mean something and God knows I need something now. Dear, don't think I blame you. All men are fools, but all men in love are damned fools, and I am the worst of all.

Good-bye,

DAVE.



Letter Received

Six months later

LONDON

MARY DEAREST:

I've been meaning to write to you for ages, but I've been rushed to death. The summer season was too wonderful. Why didn't you come over? So you're a star now; that's splendid. I'm so happy for you. You must come over here and conquer *les anglais*—a success over here means so much. By the way, is this Mr. David Manners, who has made such a hit over here, the man that used to play with you? He is the talk of town and is asked everywhere. His engagement to the Hon. Evelyn Waring was announced last week; rather funny, an actor marrying a title. It's usually the other way round. Write me some news, dear. I pine to hear from you.

As ever yours,

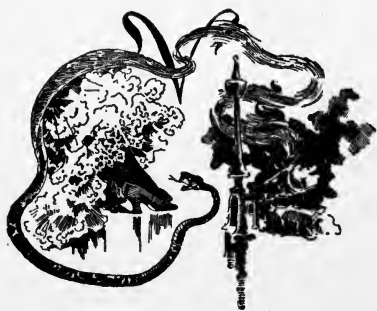
ETHEL.



"There never was a heart so badly broken but that it could be mended by flattery."

The Platonic Friend







Letter One

CHICAGO

DEAR LITTLE BUD:

My, it was great seeing you again and just talking our ears off! You're a wonder and you know your big Bud is the first one to want to see you get up. Why, when I saw your name in front of that big theater in electric letters I nearly did a funny fall. Rather different from the first time I met you in Milwaukee five years ago. What a kid you were—just starting—and do you remember the night we swore to always be pals, nothing more, and we shook hands on it and you took a drink of straight whiskey to prove that you were a brother to me. Well, this is all to lead up to the following: Bud, dear, I've been kidding myself, I'm afraid. This

last time I had a very hard struggle to keep from holding your hand each time we met or said good-bye, and many other indications. A fellow don't think of his brother's hand as being so lovely and slender and her mouth as being so red and—well, anyway, Bud, write me a line and tell me you don't mind if I don't exactly think of you as I did when you were twenty.

Your old

Bud.





Her Answer

DEAR OLD BUD:

To be perfectly frank with you, you may have been kidding yourself, but I have not; for though I may have at the age of nineteen firmly believed that there was such a thing as platonic friendship for men and women, I do not believe it now. When a man is a brother to a woman who is in the least attractive, there is usually a good reason, and it is generally that he wants the privilege of patting her hand if he feels like it or squeezing her arm in good fellowship, and last but not least, he gets her confidence as much as a man can ever get the confidence of a woman. With the woman, if the victim is the type who doesn't like soft women, she will say to herself, "We will start by being good pals. I will light a cigarette for him, play for him while he sits and doesn't feel that he has to

make love to me," and many little seductive plans are woven thereupon. The woman knows that the man is but human and that some day when they're fooling about, wrestling over some book that she is reading and he tries to take from her (the old game) he will hurt his little pal—and then the big scene comes. It's always the same; at least I have found it so. I do say it can be honest on one side, but the other side is play-acting. This is all by way of leading up to the following: I expect you to hold my hand when we meet and I want you to admire my mouth and I know you have done both ever since we met. You have been honest. I have been play-acting. I am a woman and play-acting is our privilege. Write soon to

LITTLE BUD.





Another Letter

CHICAGO

DARLING GIRL:

Away with all the "Bud" idea. I am awake at last. Will you marry me? I can give you everything that you want. We are companionable and all that. What do you say? Of course, as usual, you are right; I have always loved you and you know it. Give me a chance, little girl, and I'll make good.

Yours,

FRANK.

Her Answer

DEAR FRANK:

Thanks so much for your kind offer. You say, "Will you marry me," as if you were saying, "Will you lunch with me on Tuesday," and I admire your *sang froid*. I agree you could give me everything that I have, and we get along well, but one thing you forgot to ask, "Do I love you?" So I have asked myself for you, and have answered "No." I admire you a lot, but also admire my work, so until I can do more than admire a man, I shall not give the work up. You will make some woman a good husband, but when the right woman comes she won't have to tell you that you love her, as I did.

Always your friend,

LITTLE BUD.





Letter From Girl Friend in Chicago

Three months later

DEAR OLD MARY:

Did you hear the big news? Our mutual friend Frank J. has gone, went and done it. Handed out the certificate, and in such a hurry, too. Don't know whether you know the real dope on the case, but I got it from a friend of the blushing (dry rouge) bride. She was in the chorus of "The Girl from Home." He sat down front one night, sent her a note, took her out to supper and one week later signed her up for life—maybe. Chicago speed—eh, what? She is a pretty little thing of the don't-tell-mother type and had only been on four weeks—came from some rube town in Illinois, but she has for-

gotten that by now, as they have sailed for an Egyptian honeymoon. How are you, old thing? I'm bored to tears, and if I saw an attractive man he would not stand as much chance of getting away as the leading lady's understudy has of playing her part; and that's some small chance, believe me. Write to me, stingy.

Always,

JANE.

"Good, true friends seldom marry; they know too much about one another."





The Millionaire



Note, with Flowers

UNION LEAGUE CLUB

DEAR MISS MARSDEN :

The other evening at dinner you very kindly told me I might call. I have thought long before inflicting myself upon you, as I suppose you are kind-hearted and were merely being kind to an "old gent," but if so, won't you please do it again? I am seeing your play to-night, and want to know if you won't come for a bite of supper with me? Bring anyone you like and as many. All I ask is the brightness of your smile.

Sincerely,

JOHN D. WAINRIGHT.





Her Response

DEAR MR. WAINRIGHT :

I shall be charmed. It has been said that I am kind-hearted, but believe me, not to the extent you give me credit for. I asked you to call because you are very interesting, and I enjoyed talking to you of things other than *my art*. So, for the same reason, I shall come to supper with you, alone, if you don't mind.

MARY MARSDEN.

His Letter

Two months later

S. S. Baltic

DEAR MARY:

I have waited until I got on the ship and safely away before writing the following, as I did not want to see you smile at an old man's foolishness. In the first place, I want to thank you with all my fifty-eight-year-old heart for the happy hours I have spent in your company. They say we love really but once. I do not believe it. For I know that I loved my wife devotedly. And my great grief in life has been that when she was taken from me she left no children for me to love, for her sake, if not for their own. Now, I know I love you fondly and truly. The world would say, "Poor old fool," but I say, "Lucky old dog," to be able at fifty-eight to love as I do; so that I am only really happy when with you, not necessarily talking to you, but just in your presence. This is the real reason of my trip abroad. I realized that in a few more weeks I should have become a

burden; for I know that your only interest in me has been that I talk to you of the world and its work and not of you and your work. That is why you spent as much time with me, and I know it. It seems rather funny for an old fool to be taking a trip as a sort of a cure for an *affaire du coeur*, but I am the living proof that it can be done. Dear girl, let me hear from you, and if at any time you tire of your work and would like a home and everything that that much abused but utterly necessary thing, money, can buy, remember that I wait with open arms for you.

Your servant,

JOHN D. WAINWRIGHT.



Her Answer

DEAR J. D.:

I cannot tell you how honored I am that you should think of me as you do, and if I have really given you any happiness it is nothing compared to that which you have given me. I miss you dreadfully and shall, as you say, let you hear from me often. I only wish that I were tired and could give up my work and accept all that you honor me by offering, but I love my work and could not give it up unless it was for something I loved a great deal more. That something I have not yet seen, and so far, don't believe exists. Write me often and tell me of your trip.

Always,

MARY.





Clipping From New York Paper

Three months later

The will of the late John D. Wainright was probated to-day. He leaves practically everything to his younger brother, William Wainright, with a few bequests to his friends and faithful servants. His will bequeaths \$10,000 to Mary Marsden, the actress, as a token of his love and esteem for one of God's own good women. The chauffeur who was driving the car which struck Mr. Wainright, causing his instant death, has been acquitted. The case came up a week ago in London and the witnesses swore that the man was not to blame. The world loses one of its great men by this accident.

*"And yet there are those
poor souls that say mon-
ey will buy anything."*

The Literary Man







The First Note

DEAR MISS MARSDEN :

I am taking the liberty of sending you my latest book, so late, in fact, that this is a proof copy. I hope you will enjoy it as much as you assured me that you have enjoyed my other mind spasms. You see, if you were not sincere, you are being punished, for out of sheer politeness you will have to read this and give me your opinion of it. The publishers await your verdict—saying nothing of the perpetrator.

HUDSON HOLMES.



Her Answer

DEAR MR. HOLMES :

“The Island of Dreams” is really too wonderful. You may tell the publishers that I enjoyed it more than anything I’ve read in years. Won’t you come in to tea with me Friday and let me tell you how really clever you are? But perhaps you have already been told. However, come anyway, if you can, and allow me to join the throng in burning incense at your most literary feet.

MARY MARSDEN.

His Acceptance

SWEETEST LADY :

With all the speed that my literary feet are capable of I shall come to you on Friday. The hours will drag along like unto the dialogue of a musical comedy until that most blessed day. I bow.

Your most humble

HUDSON HOLMES.



Another Letter Two Weeks Later

FLOWER IN THE DESERT OF MY LIFE:

Examine carefully my heart, which, two weeks ago, you took from me, and see if it is not broken. The gods have carefully blocked the pathway of roses on which I tread when coming to you with obstacles which I cannot overcome. I must leave town for two or three days. My existence without your exquisite self will be like a Scotch and soda *sans* Scotch, but the gods decree, and, being merely mortal, I obey. Loveliness, I cannot, even though I am a near writer of fiction, write down my love for you, I suppose, because my love is not fiction. In these last two weeks I have had my heaven, and, if I never have more, I can sigh happily and think of the little suppers, lunches, dinners, talks and walks with you. *Ange suprême*, I kiss your eyes and fly but to return and kiss them once again.

Ever thine,

H. H.

Letter Received Two Days Later

MARY MARSDEN :

If you care at all about doing what's right, do not see H. H. again. His poor young wife, who is ill at the home of her mother in the little town where he met, loved and married her, adores him, and if you come between them you will suffer.

A FRIEND.

P. S.—He is with her now. Be fair. Give him up and let him stay there.



Her Letter To Him Next Day

I have read in your own novels of men of your type, but I fondly believed they were fiction. I would not have believed a thing so low could live in such a nice world. I, too, must be low to have known you and have thought I loved you. It was not you, it was your brain. And where is the fairness in your being allowed to have that brain? I do not need to explain. You know what has happened. Not for a long time shall I regain my self-respect. How the gods must have laughed when you blamed them for the obstacles that blocked your way to me, obstacles put in the path by your own selfish desires. I could go on, but why?

Tout passe, tout lasse, tout casse.

Beg your wife to forgive you. I can *forget* you.

M. M.



His Answer

To only beautiful women is given the power and desire to be cruel. In your cruelty you are supreme. But you cannot kill with your poor little pen the love that your soul demands. I am low in the dust before you, and you may trample upon me; but I still love you with the same love that made me deceive you. They say where there is real love there can be no fear; but love is the father of fear. I know. I have never been afraid, but you came, I loved and I feared to tell the truth lest the frail bubble of happiness might burst. Five years ago I went to a little town for the summer to finish up that book that you deigned to like, "Ashes of Roses." I met this young girl. She was sweet and I married her. We have never had anything in common. She has never understood me. She has loved her child, and I have loved my books. You are the only woman in my life. We do not always marry the people we love, or love the people we marry. If you do not forgive me I shall go mad. Be kind. I love you so.

H. H.



Her Reply

I should not even answer you, but you say one or two things that I must reply to. Men do not go into country towns and marry girls just to give them a trip to the city. They usually love them at the time, or think they do. Of course, they tire of the simple country maiden and usually do as you did, seek out an actress who is supposed to be worldly, but who, because of all she knows, is more simple-minded than any dairy maid. Half our lives are spent in getting a thing, and the other half in tiring of it. You say you and the poor girl you married have had nothing in common, but you *have* had a child. You say she has never understood you. Of course she has not, or she never would have married you. Please do not write me again, for I shall not open your letters. I prefer to read your books.

M. M.

*Clipping From N. Y. Paper Two
Months Later*

HUDSON HOLMES SAILS

Having launched his latest book, "The Island of Dreams," on the sea of success, Mr. Holmes and his very pretty young wife and their little girl, sailed to-day on the *Amerika*. They will be gone about six months. Most of that time will be spent in Italy, where Mr. Holmes intends to lay the scenes of his new book. Mrs. Holmes was Miss Margaret Manning, so that accounts for the dedication on the fly leaf of the new book, "To M. M., my inspiration."

*"When some men marry they
check their conscience at the
church door, and in their excite-
ment proceed to lose the check."*





The Farmer





The Man from Home

SUNNYVALE FARM

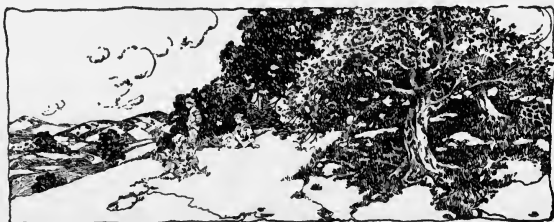
MY DEAR LITTLE GYPSY:

My old name for you does not seem to fit the successful Broadway star, Mary Marsden, but I will not be cheated out of it, for I loved you and gave you that name, long before New York loved you and gave you the name of "Star." I sound quite resentful, don't I? Well, dear Gyp, I hate to be an old country kill-joy, but I find that I am really jealous of your success, and of the thousands of men who have the right to see you, hear you, and admire you night after night, while I, who love you for yourself and not for your acting, have to be content to sit on my porch, dreaming of you and hating everyone in the world but yourself. I remember your telling me once that to be jealous is human, to admit it is fatal, and to show it is vulgar, but I cannot help it, dear. How I do run on! Old Bessie has a new calf—a little brown one, which, for some unknown reason, I have named Gypsy. Every animal on the farm is either Mary, Gyp or Gypsy, it seems to me.

I have one hundred plymouth rocks now and about fifty leghorns, forty-two little chicks in the incubators. Have just finished a new henhouse and am going to personally white-wash it to-morrow. The garden is beautiful. All the pansy beds that you planted the last time you were here are more wonderful than ever. Darling girl, I don't want to complain, but do you know that you used to write me twice a week and then my share dropped to once a week and it has slowly diminished until I have not heard from you in a month. Please write me, for you know what it means to me.

Always your old farmer,
FRED.

P. S.—Emily was over to-day. She says your mother is feeling very fit now. That little sister of yours is developing into a great beauty.





Her Answer

DEAR OLD RUBE :

Do forgive me. I have been meaning to write every day, but as you well know, Procrastination is my real name; and then I have been so busy. Have been overdoing the social side of my life, and am a perfect mental ruin. Sometimes I get so tired of it all I could scream for help. I am now at the stage where I hate this part and every one in the theater, even the property man, poor soul, who only hands me the burnt sugar, which is the fatal poison that I drink and thereby end the tiresome play. I love hearing about the farm. I shut my eyes for a minute and thought I was back in our orchards. I could feel myself climbing that dear old tree, so that I

could drop an apple on your unsuspecting head. Oh, it was wonderful, and just as I was about to drop the apple that curse of the universe, better known as a French maid, entered and remarked that Mademoiselle must not forget she had to see the gentleman from the *Evening Journal* at 4:30. Away went all my day dreams and, believe me, that poor newspaper man must have thought me an unpleasant and unintelligent little party. Write me more of the farm. I pine for the cool, sweet air of Sunnyvale.

As ever,

GYPSY.





His Reply

SUNNYVALE.

DEAREST GYP:

The way you signed your letter has given me cause for much thought, and at the risk of boring you, I am going to talk seriously to you. "As ever," you say. What I want to know is, do you really mean "as ever?" Do you remember the night before you left home to go on the stage when you said, "I love you Fred, but I could never be satisfied to marry and settle down here with you until I have tried my wings. I shall always love you, and after I have tried and perhaps failed, or even if I succeed, then I will come back to you and love you and Sunnyvale all the more, after I see something of the world." Those

were your words. I have memorized them as you do a part in a play. Dearest, that is six years ago; you were eighteen. I have lived on the hope held out to me by you on that wonderful night. Now, I want to know if you really mean, "as ever?" If you do love me the same, and if you are ready to fulfill your promise? You have had success, you have seen the world, and now I am here waiting, as I have been doing ever since that night. Understand, I don't want you to pity me and keep your word unless you are really pining for the air of Sunnyvale, for the chickens, the garden and, last but not least, for me. I do not hold you to your promise, for promises made at eighteen are rarely kept at twenty-four. Don't try to be a heroine, dear. Tell me the truth; I am strong and can stand it, but I must know now. The longer we wait, the worse it will be for me.

As ever and always,

FRED.

P. S.—Take your time and think well before you answer.

Her Answer

DEAR, DEAR FRED:

I have thought and thought until it seemed my brain must burst, trying to make up my mind to give it all up and come to you. Dear old fellow, I cannot do it. This life is in my blood. Success is a wonderful and alluring mistress that few have the courage to leave, but hang on until she tires of them and leaves them. My pining for Sunnyvale was only temporary, and even then, it was not for Sunnyvale; something new, something to conquer, a new part, a new country. This acting is like a drug. At first you are satisfied and stimulated by a little dose; then slowly and surely you increase the dose until you take an overdose and that's the end. My overdose will be when I attempt a part that is too much for me. I meant it when I said "as ever," for I do love you as much as I ever did, but my life—this life—has taught me that that was not love. When we really love people, we cannot calmly say, "I love you, I am going away for a few years." We say, "I love you, take me and don't ever leave

me." Don't you see, dear, that I was a child ; now I am a woman, and God knows not as happy with all my success as I was then. Dear Fred, try to forgive me, I can't help it. I can't live without it all, and until I see a man that I cannot live without I shall go on and on increasing my dose and seeking for the unattainable bluebird, "Happiness."

MARY.





His Answer

GYPSY DEAR :

I knew it before I opened the letter. I am not a fool. I have felt all that you say. Sunnyvale has lost its sun for me, dear, but I will not complain. I shall only pray that some good man will come along that you will think you cannot live without. After all, it is in the thinking, dearest, for there is no one we cannot live without, as proven by my still existing after receiving your letter. Be happy, little Gypsy, and think sometimes of the farmer that you loved when you were eighteen, but not when you were twenty-four. Nothing in this wonderful world lasts, dear, and least of all, love.

God bless you,

FRED.

Letter From Mary's Sister, Emily

Five months later

DEAR SISTER MARY:

I am the happiest girl in the world. Fred has asked me to marry him and I have said, "Yes." Oh, dear sister, I did not dream that such happiness could exist. I have often thought it was funny that dear Fred did not notice the girls around here, and to think that all the time he has been in love with me. We will be married this spring. I am ready now, but dear Fred says he has always wanted to be married when the pansies were in bloom; just one of his sweet, quaint ideas. I know you will be pleased, for you always admired Fred yourself.

Lovingly,

Your little sister,

EMILY.

*"Time heals all wounds,
but oftentimes leaves a scar."*



The Stranger







Mary Writes in Her Diary

The new play was a great success to-night. I know it is the best thing I have ever done. It was a wonderful house and we got eight curtain calls after the last act. I got many wonderful flowers. There was a most interesting man in the front row. When I made my first entrance I met his huge gray eyes, and all evening long I kept looking into them against my will. He did not applaud and when I came out after the big third act scene to make a speech, I could feel him looking bored, and as if to say, "Why make a speech, so commonplace?" Most interesting when the curtain dropped, I rushed to the peephole, only to see his long thin back moving slowly up the aisle. First thrill I've had in years.



His Note

MARY MARSDEN :

I shall not make any long speech about this being informal. I have seen you and like you. You have seen me and like me, I feel. I shall be waiting for you at the stage door—the first one, by the way, I have ever waited at. If you want to know me, speak to me; if not, I bow to your judgment.

THE MAN IN THE FRONT ROW.

Scene at Stage Door

Enter Miss Marsden rather nervously, maid following. Going up to stranger.

MISS M.: How do you do? (Shaking hands.)

STRANGER: How are you? (Pause.)
Where shall we go to supper?

MISS M.: Oh, I don't care. Anywhere you like.

STRANGER: My car is here. Will you send your maid along?

MISS M.: You may go, Marie; don't wait up for me.

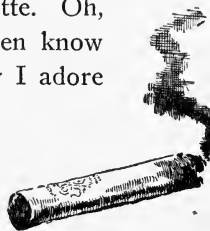
STRANGER: Thanks.

Exit Miss M. and Stranger in 90 H. P. Fiat roadster.



Mary Writes Again

I have met him. He is too wonderful to be true. Tall, thin, wonderful, thin face, not handsome, but intensely interesting. Enormous gray eyes that say everything. We motored out to Claremont and had a perfect little supper and talked of everything. I felt as if I had known him all my life. I think I must be going mad to meet a man like this and go to supper with him, but I have always wished that I could forget my theories and do something rash. Now, I have done it and have never been so happy. I am going into the country to lunch with him to-morrow alone. It's wonderful how one's ideas about chaperons and formality can be blown away by the puff of the right man's cigarette. Oh, I'm so foolishly happy. I don't even know his name or address, but I do know I adore him.





His Letter

Two days later

DEAR MARY MARSDEN :

I knew from the first moment I saw you that you are the woman I have been searching for all of my thirty-one years; one who had no petty ideas of convention; one who could feel and be carried away by her feelings. Had you hesitated that first night because we had not been properly introduced, I should have gone away and never have seen you again, more disappointed with life, with the world and the pigmies that live in it than ever, but you did not disappoint me; you are my one big woman.

Now, for a few details: My name is Hugh Gordon, aged thirty-one, appearance—well, you know the worst about that detail. Occupation, I have none. I was educated to be a lawyer, but law bored me, so I became just a loafer and seeker of happiness. I have found that in you, if you care to realize my ambition in life for me. I have more money than I can spend. I travel most of the time alone because I have never found anyone I wanted as a traveling companion. I have done everything I should not do, and very little I should do. I love you with all that is in me to love with. Am starting on a trip around the world day after to-morrow, my third trip, but in reality my only real trip around the world if you will go with me. In short, Mary Marsden, will you marry me to-morrow and sail with me the next day on the steamer *Lusitania*.

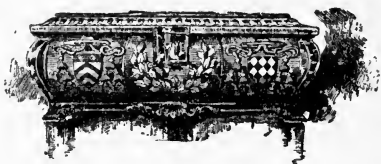
Your most humble and your most adoring servant,

HUGH GORDON.

P. S.—The I's in this letter make it read like an essay on myself, but it is only an explana-

tion I think due you. I will not tell you of my family connections, for I know they would mean nothing to a woman of your kind if she loved a man.

H. G.



Her Answer

DEAR HUGH GORDON :

Yes, with all my heart. I——





The Awakening

"'Tis twelve o'clock and Mademoiselle said she wished to be called," spoke the French maid.

Mary Marsden awoke to the stern realization that she had been dreaming a strangely pleasant dream, but that she must meet her manager at two o'clock to hear a new play read, and also that rich and good-looking men only in dreams reach the age of thirty-one without being snatched by some one of the more deadly sex; that young women who have been in New York more than a week do not dash forth with strange young men in automobiles, even if they are ninety horse-power (the motor, not the young man); and in real life men seldom propose to women the second time they meet them; and, last but not least, that stars do not leave their managers without warning and take trips around the world when the right man comes along, but usually

marry in secret and keep right on playing, oftimes to support the right man in the style he has been accustomed to. Yet, with all the realizations that the coffee and rolls brought to Mary Marsden, that night at the theater, had anyone been watching closely, they would have seen her eyes glance toward the front row, vaguely hoping to meet a pair of large gray ones that said everything, but, alas, only meeting the puffy ones of a very smug, fat, old man who saw nothing because he was too proud to wear his glasses.



Our dreams are the playthings of our minds and, like all playthings, are made to be broken.

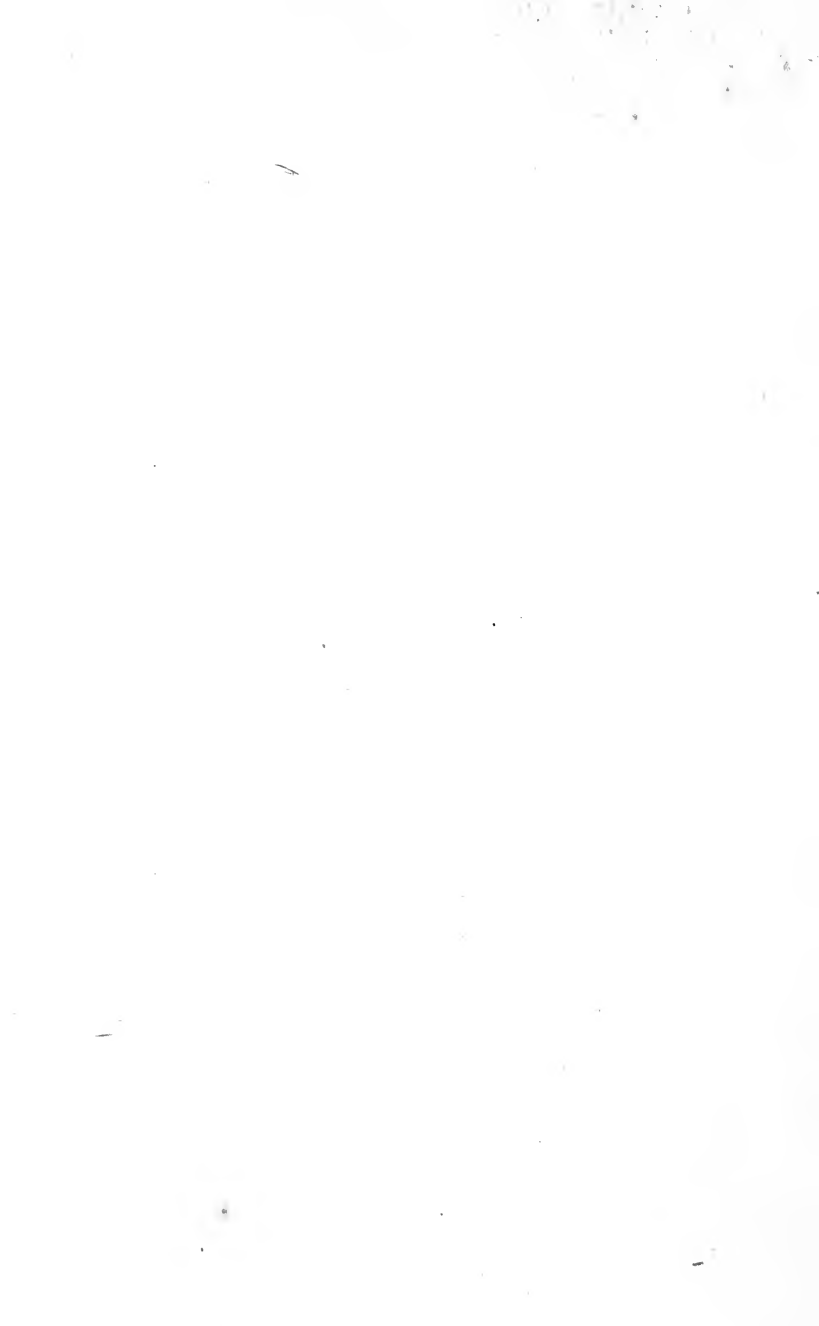


Après-Tout

*In each life there is a Something
That remains the unattained.
In each heart there is a longing
For Something it has not gained.
So we go on madly struggling
In some future love we dwell,
Yet they say that for each struggler
There's a Someone. Who can tell?*

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